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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 004263

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FOR NEA/ARPI; LONDON FOR TSOU; PARIS FOR ZEYA

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SUBJECT: FM TO TRAVEL TO JEDDAH FOR OCTOBER 2 MEETING OF
IRAQ'S ARAB NEIGHBORS

REF: JEDDAH 3758

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

1. (C) During an October 1 meeting, Foreign Minister Shaykh Dr. Mohammed Al-Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah told the Ambassador he would travel to Jeddah for the October 2 FM-level meeting of Iraq's Arab neighbors: Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Syria; as well as Bahrain as current President of the Gulf Cooperation Council; Algeria; the Arab League; and Egypt "because it's Egypt" (reftel). Iraq is also scheduled to attend. He described the grouping as a new committee of the Arab League to help Iraq. He noted surprise that Saudi Arabia was hosting the meeting, referring to Saudi FM Saud Al-Faisal's September 24 remarks on Iraqi disintegration, but said the gathering was an opportunity to mend fences.

2. (C) Shaykh Dr. Mohammed asked if there were particular issues the U.S. hoped would be addressed. The Ambassador shared with him the Secretary's September 30 Princeton speech and outlined issues, including debt and Sunni outreach, that Ambassador Jeffrey will raise on his visit to the region.

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LEBARON